CLAIMS

1. A process for the production of microcapsules containing a drug, characterised by the following steps:

a. coating drug microparticles with a layer of ethylcellulose

b. further coating the product of a. with a layer of an acrylic polymer

2. A process according to claim 1, where the coating in step a. is applied by phase separation microencapsulation or by fluidized bed coating.

3. A process according to claims 1-2, where the coating in step b. is applied by spraying a solution or suspension of acrylic polymer onto the particles obtained in a., suspended in a fluidised bed.

4. A process according to claim 3, where said solution or suspension is a hydroalcoholic solution, comprising the following weight percentages of components, calculated with respect to the total weight of the solution:

- acrylic polymer: 4-20%
- alcohol: 30-94%
- water: 0-40%
- micronised inorganic material: 2-20%

5. A process according to claim 3, where said hydroalcoholic solution or suspension comprises the following weight percentages of components, calculated with respect to the total weight of the solution:

- acrylic polymer: 7-20%
- alcohol: 40-75%
- water: 10-35%
- micronised inorganic material: 5-9%

6. A process according to claims 4-5, where said alcohol is ethanol, and said inorganic material is talc.

7. A process according to claims 1-6, where the product of step a. has a drug / ethylcellulose weight ratio (phase ratio) comprised between 1:1 and 30:1, and the product of step b. has an acrylic polymer content comprised between 5% and 40% by weight .

8. A process according to claim 1-6, where the product of step a. has a drug / ethylcellulose weight ratio (phase ratio) comprised between 3:1 and 15:1, and the

product of step b. has an acrylic polymer content comprised between 10% and 25% by weight.

9. A process according to claims 1-8, where the taste-masked microcapsules obtained in step b. have a weight median diameter comprised between 20 and 800 µm, preferably 100 - 400 µM, drug potency comprised between 400 and 950 mg/g, and are capable of releasing at least 80% of the drug contained therein within 30 minutes preferably within 10 minutes in a aqueous acidic media.

10. Microcapsules containing a drug, obtainable by the process described in claims 1-9.

11. Microcapsules according to claim 10, formulated in a pharmaceutical administrable form.

12. Microcapsules according to claim 11, wherein said pharmaceutical administrable form is chosen from dry powders for extemporaneous suspensions, tablets, minitablets, microcapsule-containing capsules, monodose sachets, fast disintegrating tablets, syrups.

13. Microcapsules according to claims 10-12, wherein said drug is chosen from penicillins, cephalosporins, carbapenem, penems, penams, aminoglycosides, macrolides, ketolides, tetracyclines, quinolones.